

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICIES for Piedmont Regional Library System

Approved July 2026

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

This policy guides the selection, evaluation, maintenance, and withdrawal of library materials within the budgetary, staffing, and space limitations of Piedmont Regional Library System (PRLS). It defines responsibility for collection decisions and establishes standards for building collections that anticipate and respond to the informational, educational, recreational, and cultural needs of the communities served.

PRLS selects a broad collection of print, audiovisual, digital, and electronically accessed materials. The Library System responds to current public interest and demand while also collecting and preserving works of lasting value.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM STATEMENT

The American Library Association (ALA) actively advocates and educates in defense of intellectual freedom—the rights of library users to read, seek information, and speak freely as guaranteed by the First Amendment. Intellectual freedom is a core value of the library profession, and a basic right in our democratic society. A publicly supported library provides free, equitable, and confidential access to information for all people of its community.

The Piedmont Regional Library subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association, appended to this Policy. The Library System makes every reasonable effort to provide access to information from a wide range of viewpoints. The presence of an item in the collection does not constitute endorsement of its content by PRLS, its Board of Trustees, or its employees. Responsibility for a minor's use of library materials rests with the minor's parent, guardian, or caregiver.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Piedmont Regional Library is to empower people, raise aspirations, and build quality of life.

COMMUNITY STATEMENT

The public libraries in this system serve residents of Banks, Barrow and Jackson counties. These residents are diverse individuals who live in a wide variety of communities, ranging from farms to small towns to rapidly growing municipalities. All patrons are important and their needs are to be met whenever possible. Each library strives to respond to its own community and user groups. As a part of a three-county system, each library agrees to share its materials with other libraries in the system whenever possible, thus broadening the available collection for all.

I. RESPONSIBILITY AND FUNDING

SELECTION RESPONSIBILITY

The Piedmont Regional Library abides by the Requirements for Public Library State Aid Grant Funds of the State of Georgia, specifically as follows:

1.1 Library System governing Boards of Trustees shall adopt and maintain a current Collection Development Policy for all libraries within the Library System.

Ultimate authority for the selection and de-selection of library materials purchased with state funds rests with the Regional Director and is delegated to professional staff at the Regional Office and to library managers. Regional staff will work with library managers whenever necessary to meet local collection needs.

The selection of all materials funded by local tax dollars or donated money shall be the authority of the local library manager, and may be selected in collaboration with the professional selectors at headquarters. For titles in question, the Regional Office has final selection authority.

Staff members and members of the public are encouraged to recommend materials for consideration. Recommendations and suggestions for purchase are evaluated under the same criteria as all other materials and are not automatically added to the collection.

FUNDING AND PROCESSING

The Regional Office will catalog and process materials for all member libraries. Materials added to PRLS collections may be funded through:

- State materials grants or other state funds allocated in accordance with applicable requirements;

- Local tax funds or local funding agencies;
- Grants and monetary donations; and
- Donated books or other materials accepted for possible addition.

All materials, regardless of funding source or method of acquisition, are subject to this policy. In accordance with the requirements for state aid grant funds:

2.2.1 The Public Library Materials Grant, when available, shall be used for the purchase of Library Materials and the cataloging and processing of these materials in accordance with the Library System Collection Development Policy. Materials grants will be determined annually depending on available funding.

II: CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

In order to achieve the fundamental purpose of libraries – organized access to information and service to all citizens – and in order to safeguard basic freedoms of our democracy, Piedmont Regional Library System seeks to:

- Make available a wide variety of contemporary ideas, views, and forms of expression, including the unorthodox and unpopular as embodied in works judged useful or meritorious by competent critics.
- Provide the basic classic works in major fields of knowledge.
- Provide current works of fiction and non-fiction as appropriate for general information, entertainment, enrichment, and education.
- Support the formal educational curriculum of area schools by providing supplemental materials.
- Build strong and age-appropriate collections of for children and young adults.
- Respond to changing demographics, community interests, and technological developments; and
- Comply with present obscenity laws while resisting the efforts of any groups or individuals to impose their personal political, doctrinal, or moral views upon the library collection.

PRLS libraries are committed to developing collections and offering access to a variety of media and resources. All materials, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the criteria listed below. An item need not meet all of these standards in order to be added to the collection.

- Popular appeal or anticipated demand
- Contribution to the diversity, depth, balance, and scope of the collection

- Accuracy, currency, and reliability of information supported by the inclusion of sources that will reinforce the authority of information provided
- Identifiable and reasonably verifiable human authorship
- Relevance to the needs and interests of residents in the service area
- Positive professional reviews or awards recognition
- Available space
- Suitability and effectiveness of the format for its intended purpose and audience
- Relationship to existing holdings and availability of similar information elsewhere
- Cost and value in relation to the Library System's finite resources.

Materials that are generally excluded or selected on a limited basis may include:

- Textbooks, workbooks, and curriculum-specific materials, unless useful to the general reader and superior to other available sources
- Academic, technical, or specialized materials that are more appropriately collected by academic or special libraries
- Materials for which authorship, publication history, factual reliability, or responsible editorial oversight cannot be reasonably evaluated
- Materials whose text or substantive illustrations are primarily AI-generated, unless evaluated by professional staff to meet the selection criteria set out above

The library acquires self-published books when they meet standard selection criteria and are readily available via regularly-used vendors. In the interest of supporting authors who are members of the library's community, PRLS encourages a Local Authors Collection at each library. Libraries will accept donated self-published books when the author is a resident of the county that the library resides in, and a single copy of the book is donated in a format suitable for circulation. Donated self-published materials will be available for checkout, but they will not be cataloged.

III. WEEDING AND DISCARD POLICY

PRLS regularly evaluates its collections to maintain materials that are current, useful, attractive, accessible, and responsive to community needs. Selection and de-selection are continuing and complementary activities. Materials may be withdrawn because of outdated or inaccurate information, damage, poor physical

condition, duplication, low use, lack of continuing relevance, superseded editions, format obsolescence, space limitations, or availability elsewhere.

Collections will be weeded according to professional standards and the PRLS Weeding Schedule. Local history, genealogy, or other materials of continuing regional significance may be retained despite low use or physical condition when their value warrants retention.

Withdrawn materials may be donated to Friends organizations or other nonprofit book sales, transferred, recycled, or discarded. Materials purchased with public funds will not be given directly to an individual patron for personal use.

IV. DONATED MATERIALS ACCEPTANCE POLICY

PRLS may add donated materials that enhance the library's collection. Donated materials are accepted with no strings attached and the individual library has final authority to [add, sell, or](#) dispose of items not added to the collection. A [Piedmont Regional Library System Donated Materials Form](#) will be offered to the patron.

Donated materials are evaluated under the same selection criteria as purchased materials. Materials generally will not be added when they have:

- Yellow/ discolored pages
- Faded, warped, loose or frayed covers
- Loose, missing or torn pages
- Incomplete sets
- Stamps, barcodes, or other markings from other library systems
- Pencil, ink, stickers, or other distracting markings on the covers or interior pages
- Outdated information
- Offensive odors
- Poor bindings
- Irrelevance to a public library collection

While condition of materials should always be a factor, those of local interest, history and genealogy may generally be exceptions to these rules.

Regional Office staff have the final authority as to whether an item will be added. Appeals by branch staff can be made to the Director.

V. MATERIALS RECONSIDERATION POLICY

No duly selected materials whose appropriateness is challenged shall be removed from the library except upon the recommendation of a review committee followed by formal action of the Piedmont Regional Library Board.

Procedures to be observed:

1. All complainants must complete the [Piedmont Regional Library System Materials Reconsideration Form](#) furnished by the library if they wish to request reconsideration of library material.
2. Upon receiving the completed complaint form, the headquarters professional staff shall review the material and gather critical reviews and/or any selection information relevant to the material.
3. The Regional Director shall appoint a review committee to discuss the material in question and to prepare written report containing their recommendations about the material.
4. The Piedmont Regional Library Board shall consider the recommendation from the review committee and make the final decision on the material by formal vote of the regional board.
5. The Regional Director shall notify the complainant in writing of the decision of the board.

APPENDIX: LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.